



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## KRETZMAN'S 'EDUCATION AMONG THE JEWS'

*Education among the Jews*, from the earliest times to the end of the Talmudic period, A.D. 500. By PAUL E. KRETZMAN, Ph.D. Boston: RICHARD G. BADGER; Toronto: The COPP CLARK Co., Limited. pp. 98.

THIS booklet consists of seven chapters, treating of seven consecutive periods of Jewish history, beginning with the earliest times (before the Flood), and ending with the Talmudic period. Each chapter first gives a historical *résumé* of the period, and then discusses the status of education during the same period, based chiefly upon detached sentences and quotations from the Bible and other writings. In his preface, the author 'proudly confesses his absolute rejection of all scientific criticism of the Bible'. While one may sympathize with such a point of view, one will hesitate to accept deductions based upon it as scientifically reliable. The most conservative student of the Bible cannot afford now to shut his eyes entirely to the work accomplished by Bible critics during the past century, if he would produce a work that lays claim to scientific accuracy.

Our author, however, is deficient not only in critical acumen, but also in the knowledge of historical facts. This is especially evident in his treatment of the period of the second commonwealth. He entirely fails to appreciate the work of Ezra, and he does not even mention the activities of the scribes and their tremendous influence on the course of Jewish education. The following quotation is characteristic of the manner in which our author deals with weighty problems of Jewish history: "At this time there were three sects among the Jews", relates Josephus, "the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes". This remark is significant, because it shows a high development of

learning among the Jews at that time.' In dismissing the activities of the sects in Jewry and their influence on the cultural life of the Jews with this brief quotation from Josephus, the author condemns himself and his work to speedy oblivion.

The last one-third of the book is devoted to the treatment of the status of education during the Talmudic period. Although this period has been treated more or less adequately in several monographs, our author did not take the trouble to consult them, but instead went for information to a few popular treatises on the Talmud, as Peters's 'Wit and Wisdom in the Talmud' and Hershon's 'Talmudic Miscellany'. Rodkinson's translation of the Talmud was also consulted by him, but even this not with any degree of accuracy. Hence, the misstatements and mistranslations are often amusing. Explaining the term Megillah, used in the law which makes it obligatory upon women to hear the reading of the Megillah, the author says that the term 'includes the Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther', while the term here refers only to the book of Esther. In another place, speaking of the Kaddish, our author mentions that it was 'used upon some very solemn occasions', and that it 'was also taught in early youth, and was thought to have great power, notably also for preserving from Gehenna'. As a reference to this remarkable statement, he mentions 'Tract Kitzur Sh'eh, Hershon, 332, 10'. This is included in his discussion of the state of education in the Talmudic period (Sh'eh probably stands here for Shalah, the abbreviation for Shene Luhot ha-Berit). The references given throughout this chapter are entirely unintelligible to the student of the Talmud, since they probably refer to the divisions and pagination of Rodkinson's edition or of Hershon's book, to neither of which conscientious students usually go for information.

It is very unfortunate that this volume is included in a series entitled 'Library of Educational Methods', which contains several important treatises, thus assuring some degree of authority also for this attempt. It is hoped, however, that any one who will go to this book for reference will soon recognize that it is a

work which offers neither correct information nor even reliable translations of quotations. Let us hope that an authoritative and scientific presentation of the History of Jewish Education will soon be produced, a work that is highly desirable, and that will be greatly appreciated not only by students of Jewish history, but also by students of education in general.

JULIUS H. GREENSTONE.

Gratz College, Philadelphia.